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6 August 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/DCI/NI *mf*

SUBJECT : Advisory Panel: Getting the List  
to Manageable Size

*Duck -*

1. The more I think about the Advisory Panel, the more I would argue that we should aim predominantly for generalists. (Some generalists, of course, are oriented toward strategic matters, and others toward political or economic, but they are still generalists.)

2. If the primary purpose of the Panel is to insure that fresh and wise outside perspectives are brought to bear on major estimates and if we're to limit it to about 35 and all are to be used with fair regularity, I doubt that we have room to appoint many specialists except at the price of having too few good generalists, or over-using the ones we have. Putting it another way, if every geographic or functional area is to have even two specialists, we will be short changed on generalists.

3. In any case, the kind of specialist whose contribution is to insure that estimates are factually accurate is the kind whose input is best made not as Panel members but as consultants to producing offices or to NIOs. For the Panel, it seems to me, we should be after people who will think bigger -- does the paper address the right questions, does it overlook the relevance of the less obvious or the less immediate, are the implicit and explicit assumptions underlying it the right ones, are there holes in the analysis, should other approaches to this subject be tried, etc. My own experience is that many country or functional specialists simply don't think in such terms. They are more apt to correct facts or argue nuances of interest only to other specialists.

4. With these thoughts in mind, I have looked over the composite (and still incomplete) list. As a very rough first try at cutting this down to manageable size, I attach a shorter selection of about 30 names. This is divided into two categories as follows:

Prime Generalists  
Good Generalists

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5. I hasten to say this list is subjective and arbitrary, and no doubt omissions reflect my own unfamiliarity with some good names. The difference between "prime" and "good" is simply that the first category grabbed me most when going over the list; others would choose differently. This model represents a rough balancing between establishment and mavericks, old and young, practical and academic, left and right, useful and ornamental, etc. As it stands now, it is weakest on business experience and economics. The purpose of boiling the composite list down to this size was simply to set up a generalists' model of manageable size, and to eliminate the more narrow specialists and what seem the obviously unsuitable [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The NIOs would no doubt want to shuffle some names off this list, and certainly to add to it. But I have a notion that, when we send the DCI a list, we should think in terms of 50 or so -- not 180.



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CONTRIBUTION TO PFIAB BRIEFING -- ESTIMATES ADVISORY PANEL

I. I am, of course, well aware of the Board's concern with improving the quality of National Intelligence Estimates. The Board has made some very useful suggestions, such as the experiment with comparative analysis on certain particularly important and contentious strategic issues, an experiment that we have begun.

II. I, too, am very concerned on the matter of quality and have taken an initiative of my own. I speak of the establishment of an Estimates Advisory Panel, of which I first informed the National Foreign Intelligence Board in early June and of which I expect you are by now already aware.

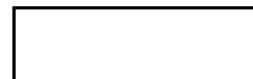
A. It is my intention that we in the Intelligence Community have at our disposal the benefit of the best minds outside government when it comes to producing estimates.

B. To this end, we have thought through very methodically just what role an Advisory Panel could play at what point in the estimative process.

1. The terms of reference for the Panel have by now been formulated and circulated to NFIB principals for their reaction.

2. In essence, we will assemble a Panel of some three dozen outstanding persons from the academic and business worlds.

a. Once one of my National Intelligence Officers has a draft estimate with which he is satisfied, we will call on three or so of the Panel's members to review the draft before that draft is submitted to the representatives of the Intelligence Community for their coordination.



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b. The Panel members will be my personal advisors and I will be ever alert to their views.

3. We have also by now solicited from the members of the Intelligence Community the names of nominees for the Panel. I understand that some 160 names have been submitted thus far, and I will soon be examining this list to make my selections.

III. I feel confident that you will agree that I have taken a step which holds out considerable hope for improving the quality of our estimative product. Experience with the Panel may suggest yet other adjustments and innovations in the future.

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am (8 Sept 76)

- 1 - PFIAB File
- ~~1~~ - Estimates Advisory Group File
- 1 - EO/DCI/NI Chrono

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